

V I N D I C I Æ

F L A V I A N Æ.

---

[Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]

V I N D I C I A

F L A N I M E

[Price One Shilling and Six Pence.]



687 2 24

VINDICIÆ FLAVIANÆ:

OR, A

VINDICATION OF THE TESTIMONY

GIVEN BY

J O S E P H U S

CONCERNING

OUR SAVIOUR

JESUS CHRIST.

---

By JACOB BRYANT, Esq.

---

THE SECOND EDITION.

---

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL AND P. ELMSLY,  
IN THE STRAND.

---

M.DCC.LXXX.

VINDICIAE FIDELIAE:

WINDICATION OF THE TESTIMONY

GIVEN BY

JOS. P. H. U. S.

CONFESSING

OUR SAVIOUR

JESUS CHRIST

BY JACOB BRYANT, Esq.

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR T. CADDILL AND R. ELMLEY,  
IN THE STRAND.

M.DCC.LXXX.

---

---

A  
VINDICATION  
OF THE  
Passage in *Josephus*,  
CONCERNING  
JESUS CHRIST.

---

**T**HIS celebrated passage has been controverted greatly. Many have engaged in the defence of it, as affording evidence very favourable to Christianity: while others have opposed it as strongly, and looked upon it as an interpolation and forgery. Before we make any advances towards the decision of this controversy, it will be proper to take a view of the Historian, in whose writings this intelligence is found. We should consider the situation, in which Josephus

B



sephus was placed; the time when he wrote, and the persons, to whom he addressed himself. For he was in many respects particularly circumstanced; and his disposition, and purpose can only be known from these considerations; which if duly weighed will afford great light to his history. He lived at \* Jerusalem, and was of the priesthood: but was for a good while conversant in Galilee. By these means he might possibly have seen some of the apostles themselves: but could not well have been unacquainted with many of the disciples of Christ, and with such as were of the first proselytes to his religion. He must have heard of the miracles performed by the first preachers of the Gospel; and of those wrought by our Saviour he must have had intelligence from persons, who were eye-witnesses: for, as St. Paul says, *These things were not done in a corner*. He appears to have been a person of parts, and learning, and had made a great proficiency in the study of the Jewish law. When he was about the age of fifteen years, he entered himself among the Essenes; a set of ascetics, who affected a superior degree

\* Josephus. Edit. Havercamp. Vol. II. p. 2. in vita Josephi.

of abstinence and purity; and were the most rigid observers of the Mosaic institutions. The person, under whose tuition he listed himself, was one Banus, a man of a severe and solitary way of life: who resided in the wilderness, and dealt much in ablutions. On this account he is by some supposed to have been a disciple of John the Baptist. After three years residence under this master Josephus returned to Jerusalem, and associated himself with the Pharisees: for he tells us, that he was determined to try every sect; and to adhere to that, which upon experience he found best. A person of this turn of mind, with so much diligence and curiosity, must necessarily have made some inquiry about Christianity and its doctrines. Its professors were now very numerous; and the miracles exhibited by Christ and his apostles sufficiently authenticated. Numbers believed them, who did not acknowledge Christ as their Saviour; and Josephus was undoubtedly of this number. For there is a great difference between admitting the facts, and making those inferences, which Christians draw from them. Those who have called this history in question, do not seem to have considered these things; which, if duly weighed,

might have made them in some degree abate of their prejudices.

The persons, who first mentioned their suspicions about this passage, were Gifanius and Osiander in the sixteenth century. They were followed by many others, men of great learning; particularly \* Jacobus Salius, Daniel Heinsius, Jacobus, and Ludovicus Capellus. To these are added \* Boxtornus, Salmasius, Gronovius, Vorstius, Frensbemius, and Tanquil Faber. This last was equal in learning to any, who went before him, and is very diffuse upon the subject. He pronounces confidently, that the whole is a forgery †: and he accordingly ascribes it to Eusebius. This is very injurious: for there is not the least ground to surmise such a fraud in that learned father. I am persuaded, that he could not have effected it. For how can we conceive it possible, when there were in his time so many copies of Josephus in different parts of the

\* Daubuz de Testimonio Josephi apud Josephum. Vol. II. Edit. Havercamp. p. 203.

† With him may be joined Sebalus Snellius, and Blondellus, who have written on the same side of the question.

world,



world, to bring about such an universal interpolation. He could forge the words; but how could he cause them to be every where admitted? for we have no reason to think that there is a single copy, where this passage does not occur. But it is said by the learned Faber, that he has other reasons for his suspicions; for the language is very like that of Eusebius. To this Daubuz makes answer, that no such likeness subsists: and indeed, whoever had brought such an allegation against another valuable writer, should have given some instances of this similarity. But from Faber we have nothing to this purpose. And whereas he maintains, that the style differs greatly from that of \* Josephus; Daubuz shews in the most satisfactory manner, that nothing can be more similar. Of this he affords undeniable proof, by examining every phrase, and almost every word; and shewing that there is nothing introduced in this little history, for which we have

\* *Nemini profecto homini unquam minus cum altero convenit, quam Josepho secum, si hæc Josephi sunt, Tanaquilli Fabri Epist. pars prima. p. 129. See Josephus. Havercamp. Vol. II. De Testimonio Christi, p. 267.*

not good authority in other parts of the same author. To every sentence, and part of a sentence, he produces parallel \* passages in the same acceptation, and perfectly analogous: by which it is manifest, almost to a demonstration, that the whole was written by the same hand,

But as many still doubt, and cannot be induced to think it genuine; it shall be my endeavour to consider it in a new light; and from the internal evidence determine the truth. Several of our own Divines have had their scruples: and among these is to be mentioned that excellent writer, Lardner. And it affords a noble instance of their uprightness, and zeal for the truth, when they set aside an evidence so favourable to their cause, because they cannot in their consciences look upon it as authentic. They have certainly acted very laudably: but I believe they would have entertained a different opinion; if they had considered the temper of the times, and the disposition of the Jews, both when our Saviour

\* They may be found collected by Mr. Whiston in the first of his Six Dissertations, published 1734.

lived, and when Josephus wrote. For a great part of the nation believed in the miracles of Christ; and looked upon him, as a prophet. They likewise perceived, that many of the prophecies were fulfilled in him. But he was rejected, he was debased, and finally crucified. He therefore in their opinion could not have been their deliverer. But though they could not allow the latter part of his character, yet, had they been called upon, they would have admitted the former; and have given attestation to many of his extraordinary works. Among people of this class, I think, we may rank Josephus: and if this be truly the case; let us see, if there be any thing in this epitome of our Saviour's life and character, which a person so circumstanced would not have said. I will lay before the Reader not only the controverted passage, but part also of the preceding and subsequent sections: that the manner of its introduction, as well as its connexion, may be seen; as these are circumstances, which will be considered in the course of this treatise.



Josephi Antiq. L. XVIII. C. III. § 2.  
p. 876.

β. Ὑδατων δὲ ἐπαγωγὴν εἰς τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα ἐπραξέ (Πιλάτος) δαπάνη τῶν ἱερῶν χρημάτων, ἐκλαβὼν τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆ ρέυματος, ὅσον ἀπὸ διακοσίων σαδίων. Ὅτι δὲ ἐκ ἡγάπων τοῖς ἀμφὶ τὸ ὕδωρ δρωμένοις· πολλὰ τε μυриаδες ἀνθρώπων συνελθόντες κατέβωσαν αὐτὰ παύσασθαι τῆ ἐπὶ τοις τοῖς προθυμῶμεν. Τινες δὲ καὶ λοιδόρια χρωμένοι ὕβριζον εἰς τὸν ἀνδρᾶ, ὅια δὲ φιλεῖ πρᾶσσειν ὁμίλος. Ὁ δὲ σολὴ τῇ ἐκείνων πολὺ πλῆθος στρατιωτῶν ἀμπεχομένον, οἱ ἐφέροντο σκυτάλας ὑπὸ ταῖς σολαῖς, διαπεμψας εἰς ὃ περιελθοῖεν αὐτῆς, αὐτὸς ἐκέλευσεν ἀναχωρεῖν. Τῶν δὲ ὠρμηκῶτων εἰς τὸ λοιδόρειν, ἀποδίδωσι τοῖς στρατιώταις, ὃ προσυνεκείτο, σημεῖον· οἱ δὲ πολὺ μείζονως, ἢ ἐπετάξε Πιλάτος, ἐχρῶντο πληγαῖς, τῆς τε θορυβήντας ἐν ἰσῷ, καὶ μὴ κολάζοντες. Ὅτι δὲ εἰσεφέρουν τὸ μαλακὸν ὕδωρ, ὥστε ἀοπλοὶ ληφθέντες ὑπ' ἀνδρῶν ἐν παρασκευῇ ἐπιφερομένων, πολλοὶ μὲν αὐτῶν ταυτὴ καὶ ἀπεθνήσκον· οἱ δὲ καὶ τραυματικαὶ ἀνεχώρησαν· καὶ ἔτω παύεται ἡ γασίς.

γ. Γίνεται δὲ κατὰ τῆτον τὸν χρόνον Ἰησῆς, σοφὸς ἀνὴρ, εἶγε ἀνδρᾶ αὐτὸν λεγεῖν χρη. Ἦν γὰρ παραδόξων ἐργῶν ποιητὴς· διδασκαλὸς ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἡδονῇ τ' ἀληθῇ δεχομένων. Καὶ πολλὰς μὲν Ἰουδαίας, πολλὰς

δε και τα Ἑλληνικα ἐπηγαγετο. Ὁ Χριστος οὗτος ην. Καὶ αὐτον, ἐνδειξει των πρωτων ανδρων παρ' ἡμιν, βαυρω επιτετιμηκοτος Πιλατη, ηκ επαυσαντο οἱγε πρωτον αὐτον αγαπησαντες. Εφανη γαρ αυτοις τριτην εχων ἡμεραν παλιν ζων. των θειων προφητων ταυτα τε και αλλα μυρια θαυμασια περι αυτη ειρηκοτων. Εἰς ετι νυν των Χριστιανων απο τῆδε ωνομασμενων ηκ ἐπελιπε το φυλον.

δ. Καὶ ὑπο τῆς αὐτῆς χρονῆς ἕτερον τι δεινον εθορυξει τῆς Ἰουδαίας. Καὶ περι το ἱερον τῆς Ἰσιδος το ἐν Ῥωμῇ πραξεις αἰσχυρων ηκ ἀπηλλαγμεναι συντυγχανσι. Καὶ προτερον τῆ των Ἰσιακων τολμηματος μνημην ποιησαμενος, ἔτω μεταδιδω τον λογον ἐπὶ τα ἐν τοις Ἰουδαίοις γεγονοτα.

§ 2. Moreover Pilate took in hand the making of a watercourse to supply the city Jerusalem: the expences of which were defrayed from the treasury in the Temple. The beginning of this watercourse was about two hundred stadia from the city. But the people in general were not pleased with the operation: and great numbers of them got together, and with loud clamours insisted, that he should desist from his design. Some of them went so far as to attack him with ill language and reproaches; as is usual with the populace.

Pilate

*Pilate upon this sent a large body of soldiers, disguised in the very habit of the people, with a kind of bludgeons concealed under their cloaths; who were so placed, as to surround them. He then desired the people to retire: but finding that they persisted in abuse, he gave a sign, which had been previously agreed upon, to the soldiers, who fell upon the rioters, and carried their chastisement farther, than Pilate intended; making no difference between those, who were quiet, and those, who were turbulent: but beat them all alike. The Jews on the other hand made no overtures of submission; so that being unarmed, and set upon by people prepared for that purpose, many of them were left upon the spot dead; and others, who got off, were very much wounded. And thus the tumult ceased.*

§ 3. *About this time appeared in the world Jesus, a man of wisdom, if it is just to call him a man. For he was a performer of extraordinary operations: a teacher of such persons as gladly received the truth. He drew over to his doctrines many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was the same as is called Christ. And, when upon the accusation of some of our principal people, Pilate had condemned him to be crucified,*



*cified, those, who had been before attached to him, did not fail to shew the same regard after his death. For he appeared to them upon the third day restored to life: all which, with numberless other wonderful circumstances concerning him, had been foretold by the sacred prophets. And there is a set of people, from him denominated Christians, which are extant at this day.*

§ 4. *Moreover about these times another unfortunate circumstance greatly distressed the Jews: and there happened also some very shameful practices in the Temple of Isis at Rome. I will first make mention of the daring impiety committed at the sacra Isiaca; and afterwards proceed to what happened to the Jews.*

What I shall immediately take into consideration, is the transcript concerning our Saviour: though both that, which precedes, and that, which comes after, will be taken notice of in the course of this treatise. In my version I have admitted one or two passages in the common acceptation: from which I shall be obliged to deviate, when I come to treat of those particular parts. My purpose is to search  
into

into the internal evidences, with which this history is attended: to consider the situation of the Jews in general, and of Josephus in particular, and of their disposition towards our Saviour and his miracles: and lastly to shew, that there is nothing in the account transmitted of Christ, the man of wisdom, but what an historian so situated, and circumstanced, as Josephus, may be supposed to have given.

Γίνεται δὲ κατὰ τῆτον του χρόνου Ἰησους, σοφος ἀνὴρ, εἶγε ἀνδρα αὐτον λεγειν χρη. *At this time Jesus appeared to the world, a man distinguished for his wisdom; if it be right to speak of him merely as a man.*

I cannot perceive any thing exceptionable in this description: for even the most bitter enemies of Christ, who attributed his wonderful works to the Prince of darkness, yet bare witness to those works; and acknowledged, that what he did, was superior to human power. Josephus therefore, who lived after this inveteracy had in some degree subsided, may, I think, easily be allowed to have given this character of our Saviour. Tanaquil Faber differs from me greatly; and speaks of the whole

whole passage about Christ, as the composition of an \* idiot. He excepts to the part above: and thinks it strange, that Jesus should be spoken of in so unbecoming a manner, and represented, as *Ιησους τις*, *one Jesus, I know not who*. Thus the Author's credibility is called in question, sometimes for speaking too much, and sometimes too little, like a Christian. But Faber's zeal transports him too far: for the word *τις* is not to be found in Josephus: and if it did occur, I cannot think, that it must necessarily bear this construction. Josephus addressed himself to persons, who were not acquainted with the history of Christ; and might very properly have said *Ιησους τις*, as Eusebius seems to have read it. I cannot therefore see any thing in the passage, either as it really stands, or as he quotes it, to which we can reasonably object. He likewise finds much fault with the expression *ειπε ανδρα αυτον λεγειν χην*: *if we may call him a man*: for from hence, he thinks, the historian must have supposed him to have been a God. But this is bringing

\* Quid dicas aliud, quam eum, a quo hæc scripta sunt, εις αυτον μαρτιας ελασαι. Fabri Epist. pars prima. p. 125. See also Josephus. Edit. Havercamp. Vol. 2. De Testimonio Christi. p. 269.



modes of speech to a severe test, which they can never abide. There are in all languages idioms, and phrases, which must be taken with some limitation. If a Lover calls his mistress a Goddess, we must not suppose, that he thinks her immortal; or that he presents her with real incense and oblations. Our Saviour says of John the Baptist, that he was a prophet, *yea more than a prophet*. Yet who ever thought that he was an Angel or Divinity? By these words was only meant, that he was superior to the prophets, who had gone before him.

Ἦν γὰρ παραδοξῶν ἐργῶν ποιητής : *For he was a performer of wonderful works.*

This likewise was a truth, to which his most bitter enemies must have given attestation. A Christian Writer would probably have spoken of these works by the terms θαυμασιῶν ἐργῶν: but the purport is the same: and the account so unexceptionable, that we need not, I should think, hesitate about it. Neither Julian, Celsus, nor Porphyry, ever disputed the miracles, said to be done by our Saviour: they might therefore readily be allowed by Josephus.

Διδασκαλός

Διδασκαλος ανθρωπων των ηδονη τ'αληθη δεχομε-  
νων.

This to some people has appeared the most exceptionable part of the whole. Yet we find here a manner of speaking, which is common with Josephus, as the learned Daubuz has observed. Of this he produces many instances.

\* Αιτιον δ' ην των ανθρωπων των ηδονη δεχομενων της λογης.—† Των βαλευτων ηδονη δεχομενων (της λογης).

—‡ Ηδονη γαρ την ακροασιν, ων λεγοιεν, εδεχοντο.—

§ Δεχομενς την ικετειαν ηδονη. Daubuz says: Phrasis est Josepho, imo Josepho Antiquitates scribenti, peculiaris. The term αληθεια, which is of the same purport, as το αληθες, occurs often in the writings of the Apostles. It was an expression, of which our Saviour continually made use; for αληθεια, *the truth*, is often put for the Gospel doctrine. || St. Paul asks the Galatians, *who hath bewitched you, that you*

\* Antiq. L. 17. C. 12. p. 864.

† Antiq. L. 19. C. 2. p. 934.

‡ Antiq. L. 18. C. 1. p. 870.

§ Antiq. L. 18. C. 4. p. 877. Many other instances are produced by Daubuz to authenticate this mode of expression. See Havercamp's Josephus. Vol. 2. p. 223. and Whiston's first Dissertation.

|| Galatians. C. 3. V. 1.

*should*

*should not obey the truth?* \* Every one, says our Saviour to Pilate, *that is of the truth, heareth my voice.* In consequence of this some have thought, that in the words of the passage above there is an allusion to these terms so often made use of by the Apostles. If this be the case, Josephus by saying, that Jesus was—*διδασκαλος ανθρωπων των ηδονη τ' αληθη δεχομενων*, may be supposed to act, as an historian of Greece would have done, if he had been to mention Zeno the Stoic: and had described him, as *διδασκαλος ανθρωπων, των ηδονη το καλον, και το πρεπον, δεχομενων*: In all which some particular terms would be alluded to, which were peculiar to the sect † described.

But, while Josephus is supposed to use the language of the Apostles, does he not speak the language of the times, in which he lived: and was not *αληθεια*, *the truth*, a common term among the Jews for religion and morality? The Historian has been thought to express himself too much like a Christian: and in

\* St. John, C. 18. v. 37.

† *Quid verum atque decens curo et rogo, et omnis in hoc sum.* HORACE.

Inter Sylvas Academi quærere *verum*.

ibid.



terms foreign to a person, who was not of that community: and upon this account great prejudices have been conceived against the passage in question. But I believe, it will be found, that both the Apostles, and Josephus, spake equally the same language; and availed themselves of terms in common use among the people of Judea: which terms were far antecedent to Christianity. The word *Truth* was taken with a great latitude; and occurs continually in the Scriptures under different acceptations: so that we must not wonder, if a Jewish writer made use of an Hebrew idiom. It is said in the Psalms, \* *I have chosen the way of truth.*—† *And thy law is the truth.* The Author of the book of Proverbs says, ‡ *Have I not written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth.* § *The lip of truth shall be established for ever.* || *God shall send forth his mercy and truth.* \*\* *They are not valiant for the*

\* Psalm 119. v. 30.

† Psalm 119. v. 142.

‡ C. 22. v. 21.

§ Proverbs, C. 8. v. 19.

|| Psalm 57. v. 3.

\*\* Jeremiah, C. 9. v. 3.

*truth upon the earth : for they proceed from evil to evil : and they know not me, saith the Lord.*

In this last instance the prophet plainly speaks of persons, who were destitute of divine knowledge, and lost to all virtue. Passages to this purpose might be brought in great numbers, were it necessary to produce them.

What was the purport of the words *αληθεια* and *το αληθες*, in the times of the Apostles, and of Josephus, may be best known from the version of the Seventy : and we may at the same time see, with what latitude they were taken. For the Septuagint was a kind of standard for the Greek language, when the Apostles wrote, and in general use among the \* Jews of all parts. The Apostles quote from it ; and it was often copied by Josephus. In short it may be esteemed the fountain, from whence they all drew. In consequence of this we find according to this version, that *αληθεια* in Proverbs is put for *□η*, integrity : for where it is said in the original, † *Better is the poor, that walketh in his uprightness*, it is rendered in the

\* See Justin Mart. Dialog. cum Tryphone. p. 170.

† Proverbs, C. 28. v. 6.

Greek, *χρηστων πτωχος πορευομενος εν αληθεια*. In \* *Isaiah αληθης* is put for צדיק. Accordingly the words, *We may say, that he is just*, are rendered, *Και ερουμιν, οτι αληθης ειν*. Job is mentioned as (ישר חם) perfectus, et rectus: which we translate † *a perfect, and just man*. In the Seventy it is rendered *ανθρωπος ακακος, και αληθινος*. It is sometimes substituted for the Hebrew חכם, sapiens. ‡ *I cannot find any wise man among you*: *Ου γαρ ευρισκω εν υμιν αληθης*. It occurs also for טוב, bonus. *Isaiah* mentions people, § *who walked in a way, that was not good*: *οι εκ επορευθησαν οδω αληθινη*: The like occurs in the writings of the Apostles. *Αληθεια* is by St. Paul used for justice, and opposed to || *αδικια*. And St. John instead of saying, *my judgment is just*, keeps to the Hebraism, and says, *my judgment is true*. \*\* *Ἡ κρισις ἡ εμη αληθης ειν*. Justin Martyr defines philoso-

\* *Isaiah*, C. 42. v. 26.

† *Job*, C. 2. v. 3.

So C. 6. v. 25. *How forcible are right words?* *σηματα αληθινα*.

‡ *Job*, C. 17. v. 10.

§ *Isaiah*, C. 65. v. 2.

|| *Corinth*. C. 13. v. 6.

\*\* *John*, C. 8. v. 16.



phy to be the knowledge of αληθεια, or truth.

\* Φιλοσοφία μὲν—ἐπισημὴ ἐστὶ τὸ ὄντος, καὶ τὸ ἀληθὺς.

From what has been said, we may perceive, that this was a term in common use; and that among other things it betokened wisdom, justice, sound doctrine, and morality. We must not therefore think, that Josephus in his application of it made use of a phrase, which was at all foreign to his character, or inconsistent with his situation. If there be any thing in it favourable to the person, whom he is describing, this must not be excepted to, because he was not himself a Christian. The officers, who were sent to seize upon our Saviour, came back in admiration of his wisdom. † *Surely, say they, never man spake like this man*: and yet we do not find that they were converts. How often do we also read, that ‡ *the people were astonished at his doctrine*: § and

\* Dialog. cum Tryphone. p. 105.

† John, C. 7. v. 46.

‡ Matthew, C. 7. v. 28. Also Mark, C. 1. v. 22. and C. 11. v. 18.

§ Matt. C. 22. v. 33.

*the multitude were astonished at his doctrine:*

*\* And they were astonished at his doctrine, for his word was with power. And yet we are not told that the people spoken of were his disciples. We may therefore fairly allow Josephus to mention Christ as a prophet of truth, και διδασκαλος ανθρωπων των ηδονη τ'αληθη δεχομενων and a teacher of those, who were well inclined to religion and virtue.*

The learned Dr. Forster made an alteration of τ'αληθη into τ'ανηθη; by which was meant, instead of things, which are *good and true*; things which are *strange, new, and † uncommon*. But this is contradictory to all, that precedes. For what has been mentioned, was certainly meant by way of commendation. It is besides inconsistent to describe Christ, as a man of wisdom, and something more than man; and then to add, that he was merely a teacher of novelty to people, who loved strange doctrines. The alteration is certainly very ingenious: but there is no more occasion for it, than there

\* Luke, C. 4. v. 32.

† See a Dissertation published upon this subject, printed at Oxford, 1749, by Dr. Forster of Corpus Christi College.

is authority : and it is repugnant to the whole tenour of the history.

Και πολλας μιν Ιουδαιας, πολλας δε και τα Ἑλληνικα  
επηγαγετο. *And he drew over many of the Jews,  
and many also of the GENTILES.*

So it is understood by \* Mr. Whiston : and he has the authority of Rufinus, Epiphanius Scholasticus, and Freculphus Lexovienfis, for this interpretation. In objection to this passage Faber and many others maintain, that there is no account of our Saviour's making any profelytes among the Gentiles : all his labour was expended upon the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But in the time of Josephus there were numbers in different nations, who had been converted by the Apostles. If therefore the interpretation above be true, the Historian places to the account of Christ those, who were afterwards won over by his disciples. If this be the case, we may perceive an error into which a Jewish writer might have fallen : but Eusebius, to whom the whole is injuriously ascribed, as a forgery, was too well informed to have been guilty of such a † mistake. But as far, as I can judge, the

\* Whiston's first Dissertation, p. 4.

† But after all, do we not go too far in this notion ?



the passage is not truly understood, and consequently not properly rendered. There were in the time of the Apostles, and during the ministry of our Saviour, Jews, devout men, who came occasionally to Jerusalem from every part of the Roman Empire. These were for the most stiled Hellenistæ; and are often opposed to the Ἰσραῖοι, or *native* Jews. Such probably were Sosthenes, and Nicanor: even \* Luke may have been of that number; and doubtless there were many more. For besides

The principal object of our Saviour's mission was certainly the house of Israel. But we cannot suppose, that he excluded others, who believed, and desired to be of his fold. What are we to think of the Centurion, whose servant was healed: and of the woman of Syrophenicia? St. John mentions a nobleman (αὐτοῦ βασιλικὸς) of Capernaum; who believed, and all his house. Are we certain, that he was a Jew? Even among the Apostles, was not Simon the Canaanite originally a Gentile? By his secondary name there is room to suppose it. It is said, Matt. C. 4. v. 24. that *our Saviour's fame went* (not only through all Judea; but) *throughout all Syria: and they brought him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases, and torments—and he healed them.* Were none of these believers? He went more than once across the lake into the region of the Gadarenes, and of other people, half pagan. Here he probably made some proselytes.

\* He was born at Antioch.

the twelve Apostles, and the seventy Disciples, there were five hundred, to whom our Saviour appeared at the same time. Many of these were probably of this class. This difference among the first proselytes to Christianity is mentioned very early by the author of the Acts: who takes notice, that the Hellenistæ thought, they were in some degree neglected, and were accordingly jealous of the native Jews. \* Εγενετο γογγυσμος των Ἑλληνιστων προς τας Ἑβραϊας. These are the persons, I imagine, whom Josephus describes under the character of τας τας Ἑλληνικας. He uses the term Ιουδαϊκον much in the same manner, when he is speaking of the Jews collectively: and he accordingly, when he is treating of Tiberius, tells us, † κελευει παν το Ιουδαϊκον της Ρωμης απελαθηναι: *he ordered the whole body of the Jews to be driven from Rome.* We should therefore for the future render the passage, και πολλας μεν των Ιουδαιων, πολλας δε και τας Ἑλληνικας επηγαγετο, *He won over to his doctrines many of the native Jews, and also many of the Hellenistæ, who were of other countries.*

\* Acts, C. 6. v. 1.

† Antiq. L. 18. C. 3. p. 879.

Ὁ Χριστός οὗτος ην.

By this the Author did not mean, that he esteemed Jesus, as the Messiah: but only, that he was the person called Christ. We may form a judgment of his meaning from the manner of his expressing himself in another place, when he is speaking of James, who was put to death by Herod. He styles him \* ἀδελφον Ιησους τος λεγομενους Χριστου: *the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ*. Many, I am sensible, have thought, that this expression Ὁ Χριστός οὗτος ην, was certainly the inditing of a Christian. But it must be considered, that Christus was a well known title of our Saviour even among the Gentiles: and as Josephus had mentioned him by the name of Jesus; he could not avoid introducing this secondary appellation to distinguish him from others of the same name. For besides Jesus, the son of Nun, he mentions in the course of his history many others so called. We read of Jesus, the son of Saphat: Jesus, the son of Josodec: Jesus, the son of Gamala: Jesus, the son of Gamaliel: Jesus, the son of Damnæus: Jesus, the same as Jason: Jesus, the Prefect of Tiberias: to which list others

\* Antiq. L. 20. C. 9. p. 976.

might



might be added. To say therefore, Jesus the same as Christ, was very natural; and almost unavoidable: so that, I think, this objection has no weight. We may therefore allow Josephus to have expressed himself in the manner above mentioned: and yet the testimony of Origen, and that of \* Theodoret, may have been very true: Ἰωσηπον τον Ἑβραιον οὐ δεξασθαι το Χριστιανικον κηρυγμα: *That Josephus the Hebrew never was a convert to Christianity.*

Faber uniformly quotes this passage, οὗτος ην ὁ Χριστος; and interprets it, *This was the Messiah.* From hence he argues, that if Josephus were the Author of this account, he must have been a proselyte. But as Origen and other Writers assure us of the contrary, he infers, that they could never have seen this account of our Saviour. It was not therefore extant in their times; or at least in their copies. But with submission to this learned man I must insist, that he does not give the true purport of the words. For the whole, that the Author means, is, as I have above shewn, that Jesus, the man of wisdom, was the same person as Christ.

\* In Comment. ad Daniëlem sub fine.

It is necessary to consider farther, to whom Josephus addressed himself in this history. Does he not tell us, that he wrote principally for the Greeks; and in the next place for the Romans? To what possible purpose could it have been, if he had told either of those nations, that Jesus was the Messiah? They would not have understood the term: and it would have served only to have embarrassed the history. But of Christ, whom they often stiled *Xristos* and *Chrestus*, they had heard. To be told, that Jesus was the same person, afforded matter of consequence, which they could easily apprehend. Faber is therefore certainly in the wrong in translating the term *Christus* *Messiah*, and making inferences in consequence of his translation. For though the terms may possibly bear the sense, which he gives them: yet they undoubtedly here should be taken in a different acceptation. If an ancient writer had transmitted to us the following history of Phercydes Syrus, in what manner should we interpret the particular part, which was designed to distinguish him? Γίνεται δε κατὰ τῆτον του χρόνον Φερεκυδης τις, ὅς περὶ τῆς τῶν Θεῶν θρησκείας, καὶ περὶ μυθῶν ἀρχαίων, πολλὰ συνεγράψεν· Ὁ Συρος οὗτος ην. What is the meaning of the  
last

last clause, ὁ Συρος κ τ λ? Certainly that he was *the person called Syrus*. Had any thing else been intended, it would have been expressed, οὗτος ἦν τῷ γένει Συρος, or, τὸ ἔθνος Συρος: and all ambiguity would have been \* prevented.

We may perceive, that great part of this dispute has arisen from the word *Christus* being liable to a twofold acceptation. It is sometimes introduced as a name, or title of distinction: at other times it relates to the high office and spiritual unction of the Messiah. When a writer mentions Ἰησοῦν τὸν λεγόμενον Χριστόν, he makes use of it merely as a name, to point out more particularly the person spoken of, and to distinguish him from others so called. But when Origen tells us of Josephus, καὶ ἐπιστεύσεν εἰς Ἰησοῦν, ὡς Χριστόν, he alludes

\* I have mentioned, that Tanaquil Faber quotes it always οὗτος ἦν ὁ Χριστός. This was undoubtedly a slip of memory: but it has perhaps served to confirm him in his opinion. For, though I may appear too refined, yet, I think, much depends upon the collocation: and the terms, Ὁ Χριστός οὗτος ἦν, convey to my ear a very different meaning, from the same inverted, and rendered, οὗτος ἦν ὁ Χριστός.

not



not to the name; but to the divine office and character of Christ. The Writers therefore, who speak in this manner, do not say any thing, from whence we may infer, that Josephus did not believe, that there was a person named Christ; but only, that he did not believe in him, as the Messiah. The Jewish historian might fairly say of Jesus, *ὁ Χριστός οὗτος ην*, scil: *λεγομενος*: *this was the person named Christ*: yet might be very far from believing in him, *ὡς Χριστός*; as a Divinity: and as the great Prince and Ruler sent from God. When therefore Tanaquil Faber insists from the Words of Origen, that the text in dispute could not be in his copy of Josephus, he certainly argues from a wrong principle: for there is no reason to make any such inference. Indeed from what Origen says in the same passage, we may be pretty sure that he had seen it. And if I may in my turn be permitted to make an inference from an Author's omissions, I will insist, notwithstanding the silence of Origen in this place concerning the celebrated passage in Josephus, that he was no stranger to it. On this account I will quote his words at large. He is speaking of James the Just; of  
whom

whom he gives the following character. \* *So very conspicuous was this man among the people for his virtues, that Josephus, who in twenty books comprised the antiquities of his nation, trying to find out some cause for the calamities of the people, attributes all that the Jews suffered, together with the ruin of their Temple, to the wrath of God, on account of their wickedness in having put this man to death; who was the brother of Jesus called Christ. And what appears most extraordinary in this historian, is, that though he does not admit Jesus, whom we worship, to have been the Christ, (or Messiah); he nevertheless affords this testimony to the righteousness of James. Now it is to be observed, that there is no part of Josephus, excepting the passage in dispute, from whence Origen could have made this inference, that the Author did not look upon Jesus, as the Christ.*

\* Επὶ τοσούτον δὲ διέλαμπεν ἔτος Ἰακώβος ἐν τῷ λαῷ ἐπὶ δικαιοσύνη, ὡς Φλαβίον Ἰωσηπὸν ἀναγράψαντα ἐν εἰκοσὶ βιβλίοις τὴν Ἰσραϊτικὴν Ἀρχαιολογίαν, τὴν αἰτίαν παραγεῖναι βελομένου τῶν τοιαύτων πεπονθέναι τὸν λαόν, ὡς καὶ τὸν ναὸν κατασκαφῆναι, εἰρηκεῖναι κατὰ μῆνιν Θεοῦ ταῦτα αὐτοῖς ἀπηντήκεναι, διὰ τὰ εἰς Ἰακώβον, τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ἰησοῦ τοῦ λεγομένου Χριστοῦ, ὑπ' αὐτῶν τετολμημένα. Καὶ τὸ θαυμαστὸν ἐστίν, ὅτι τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἡμῶν ἡ καταδικασμένος εἶναι Χριστὸν, ἔθεν ἡττοῦ Ἰακώβου δικαιοσύνην ἐμαρτυρήσῃ τεσσαυτὴν. Comm. in Math. C. xiii. 55. p. 230.

In this passage the Historian says, that he was the same person, as Christ: and that a set of people called Christians still remained: in which account he tacitly excludes himself from being of that number. There is not a syllable elsewhere mentioned, from whence Origen could have made such a deduction. He must therefore of a certainty have seen this history of our Saviour.

But let us proceed to a stricture upon Josephus, similar to that above, from another part of Origen. \* *This Writer, though he did not believe in Jesus, as the Christ, or Messiah, yet when he was searching out the cause of the city's*

\* 'Οδ' αὐτος, καίτοιγε ἀπίστων τῷ Ἰησοῦ ὡς Χριστῷ, ζητῶν τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς τῶν Ἱεροσολυμῶν πτώσεως, καὶ τῆς τῆ Ναβ καθαιρέσεως, δεὸν αὐτὸν εἰπεῖν, ὅτι ἡ κατὰ τὴν Ἰησοῦ ἐπιβουλὴ τούτων αἰτία γέγονε τῷ λαῷ, ἐπεὶ ἀπέκτειναν τὸν προφητευόμενον Χριστόν. Ὅδε, καὶ ὥσπερ ἀκὼν, ἔ μακρὰν τῆς ἀληθείας γενομένος, φησὶ ταῦτα συμβέβηκεναι τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις κατ' ἐκδικήσιν Ἰακώβου τε δίκαιον, ὅς ἦν ἀδελφὸς Ἰησοῦ τῆ λεγομένου Χριστοῦ, ἐπειδὴπερ τὸν δικαιοτάτον αὐτὸν οὐτὰ ἀπέκτειναν. — Εἰπερ οὖν διὰ Ἰακώβου συμβέβηκεναι λέγει τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τὴν ἐρημώσιν τῆς Ἱερουσαλὴμ, πῶς ἔχει εὐλογώτερον διὰ Ἰησοῦν τὸν Χριστόν τὰτο φασκεῖν γεγενῆσθαι. Origen. cont. Cels. L. 1. p. 35. Edit. Cantab.

ruin,



*ruin, and of the destruction of the Temple, ought to have acknowledged, that all this happened on account of their injustice towards Jesus; and of their having slain the Christ, who had been foretold by the Prophets. But he acceding in some degree, though, as it were, unwillingly, to the truth, says, that all this evil came upon the Jews, as a judgment from God, for their behaviour towards James the Just; who was the brother of Jesus, called Christ. For they put him to death, though he was confessedly a man of the most consummate virtue. If then he could attribute the destruction of Jerusalem to \* James, with how much more propriety might he have ascribed it to the death of Jesus Christ? We find here, that Origen seems to blame Josephus for not attributing the evils,*

\* Origen did not consider, that James survived our Saviour many years: and people, who suppose calamities to be judgments from God, generally refer them to some recent instance of wickedness and injustice. Our Saviour's death was rather at too great a distance from the destruction of Jerusalem to have it in general referred to as the cause. Not but that this calamity, and all that the Jews suffered, came upon them for having rejected the Messiah. Their having slain the just one was the true cause of their ruin. But as they knew not the person, they were equally ignorant of the cause; and referred their misfortunes to another original.

which

which the Jews experienced, to Christ, rather than to James: for he was a person of more consequence; and their outrage to him more heinous. But how could he have expected any such thing from this Historian; if he had never shewn, that he was at all acquainted with Christ; but only had mentioned his name incidentally? Origen thinks the behaviour of Josephus upon this occasion still more strange, as Christ had been foretold by the Prophets. But the Historian must have shewn that he was acquainted with our Saviour's character; or how could he have known, that it was conformable to the prophecies, which had preceded. When this learned Father tells us, that Josephus did not believe in Jesus, as *the Christ*, some may perhaps think, that he formed his judgment from the words *αδελφος Ιησους τος λεγομενους Χριστους*: which by a person, who believed, would have been rather expressed *Ιησους τος Χριστους*. From hence he may be thought to have concluded, that Josephus was not a Christian. But St. Mathew uses the same terms, \* *Ιησους ο λεγομενος Χριστος*; and no one can suppose him to have been an unbeliever.

\* C. i. v. 16.

D

Origen

Origen must therefore have formed his opinion upon other grounds: from the evidence of the Historian in the passage, which is the subject of debate. The very words of Origen, 'Ο δ' αὐτός, καίτοιγε ἀπιστῶν τῷ Ἰησοῦ ὡς Χριστῷ, wherein he intimates, *that Josephus did not believe in Jesus, as the Christ*; shew, plainly, that the Historian did in some degree believe; and that he had afforded evidence of his belief. This is manifest past all dispute.

We may then be assured, that Josephus had given an history of this divine person: and Origen had certainly seen it: as is plain from what has preceded. Otherwise he would not have blamed the Historian for not mentioning Christ, as the cause of these calamities; but for not mentioning him at all. The first was only a wrong inference; not so much of Josephus, as of his countrymen; and of little consequence. But the latter, had it been true, would have been a fatal omission; and an unpardonable defect: for he, who knew so much of the disciple, could not well be ignorant of the Master; and should have taken proper notice of his character. All which in reality we find done. Origen therefore



fore was acquainted with this passage: and as he tells us more than once, that Josephus never admitted Jesus to have been the Saviour of the world, he shews plainly how he interpreted the words, Ὁ Χριστός οὗτος ην.

Και αὐτον, ἐνδείξει τῶν πρώτων ἀνδρῶν παρ' ἡμῖν, σαυρῶ ἐπιτέτιμηκοτος Πιλάτῃ, ἔκ ἐπαυσαντο οἶγε πρῶτον αὐτον ἀγαπήσαντες. *And when Pilate, upon an accusation of the principal persons among the Jews, had condemned him to be crucified, those, who had from the beginning shewed their regard for him, still persisted in their affection.*

All this is very consistent with the true history, of our Saviour: and there is nothing in the description, but what may be attributed to Josephus. The learned Daubuz here, as in every other part of the narration, shews the conformity of this with other extracts from the same writer; bringing indisputable authority for every word, and every phrase.

Ἐφανη γὰρ αὐτοῖς τρίτην ἔχων ἡμέραν πάλιν ζώντων θείων προφητῶν ταῦτα τε, καὶ ἀλλὰ μυρία θαύμασια περὶ αὐτῶν εἰρηκοτῶν· εἰς εἰς νῦν τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἅπασα τὰδε ὠνομαζομένων ἔκ ἀπελίπε το φύλον. *For*

*he appeared to them upon the third day restored to life, according to the predictions of the sacred prophets; who had foretold this, and many other wonderful circumstances concerning him. And to this day there exists a sect, who are from him denominated Christians.*

This testimony of Christ's resurrection, and of his appearing afterwards to his disciples, has been by most people thought very suspicious: and their scruples have been increased to an utter disbelief by the account introduced of the prophecies, which foretold these events: and besides these, *ἀλλὰ μυρία θαυμασία*, *many thousands* of wonderful circumstances, which were fulfilled in Christ. I must confess, that for many years I afforded no credit to this account: and in consequence of it gave up the whole, as an interpolation; it seeming to me inconceivable, that this could be the attestation of a Jewish writer. But upon a more mature consideration, I have been obliged to alter my opinion: for I found, that my prejudices arose from my having considered the passage singly, as it is generally quoted; without any regard to the situation of the Historian; or to the age, in which he wrote, or to the people, to whom it was addressed: all  
which

which circumstances require our attention greatly. I shall therefore take in a larger field; and hope, by comparing this extract of Josephus with various passages both in sacred and profane history, to obtain such internal evidence, as shall determine the truth.

The principal objection, which people have made to the account above given, is, that Josephus could not have afforded this attestation about our Saviour, unless he had been a \* Christian: and we have good assurances, that he was not. Now on the contrary I am persuaded, that many would have given a like testimony, had they been called upon, though they were not of the Christian community. For all, that we have here told us, is, that Jesus was an extraordinary person, and wonderfully endowed: one, who had this immunity above

\* *Ea enim, ut recte ab homine Christiano dicerentur, ita a Judæo Sacrificatore scribi quis credat? Tanaquil Fabri Epist. p. 131.* Mr. Whiston is of the same opinion. He thinks, that Josephus could not have given this character of Christ, unless he had been in some degree a Christian: He accordingly supposes him to have been an Ebionite or Nazarene. See *Six Dissertations*, p. 57. and p. 60.



others, that his body was not confined to the grave; but was raised upon the third day. I make no doubt, but that many of the chief priests believed it: the soldiers certainly did, who guarded the sepulchre, yet we never hear of their becoming profelytes. They gave their attestation to this great event: and it was undoubtedly believed by many others; and why not by Josephus? When Herod, the Tetrarch, heard of the fame of Jesus, he said, *\* This is John the Baptist: he is risen from the dead: and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.* We find, that he believed in Christ's miracles; and in the possibility of his resurrection, before it happened: Why then should it not be believed, when it really came to pass? Herod does not in the least hesitate about the truth of these things: and yet he was no more a witness to them than Josephus. The Jews in general were under the like conviction: and they perceived, that many of the prophecies were fulfilled in Christ. Those, who had seen the miracle of the loaves and fishes, said, *† This is of a truth that*

\* Mathew. C. 14. v. 2. Mark. C. 6. v. 14. 15.

† John. C. 6. v. 14.

*Prophet, who should come into the world.* By this was meant the Prophet, who was foretold by the sacred writers. In another \* place, upon hearing his wisdom, the people cried out, *of a truth this is the Prophet*: that is, the person foretold: by which they shewed, how much they were convinced, that many of the prophecies were in him fulfilled. Josephus believed in the Prophets. Speaking of himself in the third person he says, † Τῶν γε μὴν ἱερῶν βιβλῶν ἐκ ἠγνοεῖ τὰς προφητείας, ὥς ἂν αὐτὸς τε ὢν Ἱερεὺς, καὶ Ἱερῶν ἐκγονός. *He was necessarily acquainted with the prophecies in the holy Scriptures, being himself a Priest, and by descent of the Priesthood.* He moreover saw plainly, that the Prophets had foretold the downfall of Jerusalem, and ruin of the Jews; though he was at a loss to account for the true cause. He accordingly in his speech to that infatuated people, during the siege, makes use of these remarkable words. ‡ Τίς οὐδε τὰς τῶν πα-

\* John. C. 7. v. 40.

† De Bello Jud. L. 3. C. 8. p. 246.

‡ Ibid. L. 6. C. 2. p. 375. He mentions Daniel's prophecy of the destruction of the temple; but thinks, that it referred to the first temple. Ant. L. 12. C. 11.

λαίων προφητῶν ἀναγραφῆς, καὶ τοῦ ἐπιῤῥηπόμε-  
 νου τῇ τλήμονι πολεῖ χρησμοῦ νῦν ἐνεῶτα; *Who is there*  
*so little conversant in the writings of the ancient*  
*Prophets, as not to see, that all the predetermined*  
*evil, which was foretold, is now coming down*  
*upon this unhappy place?* By the particular  
 time, in which our Saviour appeared, and by  
 the wonders, which were authenticated con-  
 cerning him, he must have been assured, that  
 he was pointed out in some degree, as an ex-  
 traordinary person: just as John the Baptist  
 had been, who went before him. He indeed  
 could not bring himself to believe, that he  
 was the Messiah Prince: for that obstacle was  
 a general stumbling-block, which few could  
 get over. He might therefore very easily say,  
 that the Scriptures in many places pointed out  
 such a person, as Christ appeared to be:  
 though he set aside all those passages, which  
 related to his kingdom: And he might allow,  
 that the prophecies foretold his wonderful  
 works, which were performed in such num-  
 bers. As to the terms, ἀλλὰ μυρία θαύματα,  
 they are collectively a Grecian hyperbole,  
 adapted to the persons, for whom he chiefly  
 wrote. Whoever is at all acquainted with the  
 Greek, and Roman languages, must know, that



by μυρια and mille is denoted a \* large but indefinite number; and that it was a common mode of expression.

We must consider Josephus, as a person reduced to a state of doubt and uncertainty: who could not extricate himself from the general embarrassment of his nation. He was well versed in the Scriptures; and knew the

\* It does not always signify a large number; at least not a number at all adequate to the true purport of the word; which means ten thousand. Homer says of the Læstrygons,

Φοιτῶν ἰφθίμοι Λαιστρυγόνες ἀλλοθεν ἄλλοι

Μυριοί—

Odyss. x. v. 119.

Josephus has a similar passage about the populace at Jerusalem, who came to impede Pilate's works. It is in the account before quoted, p. 8. He styles them πολλὰι μυριαδες ἀνθρώπων, *many myriads of men*. If we were to take it literally, what number of myriads shall we deem many? Suppose we go as low as ten: these amount to one hundred thousand: or to five; these will make fifty thousand. And after all the whole number might not be above five or six hundred. From hence we may perceive that by μυρια is only meant *many* indefinitely: and by μυρια ἀλλὰ θαυμασία, *many other wonderful things*. We must not therefore suffer this expression to alarm us. Μυρια, πολλά. Hesych.

purport

purport of the prophecies, and the \* expectation of the world. But at the very time, when he, and the chief of his nation, were in hopes of a mighty deliverer; they saw their temple burnt, their country enslaved, and the Jewish polity ruined. They had been told, that a Lawgiver should not fail in Judah, until Shiloh came. But a Lawgiver did now fail: and though they looked round, no Shiloh, no Saviour, appeared. The Christians indeed said, that they had found him, as he was prefigured by the prophets: and the person alluded to was certainly a wonderful man, εἶγε ἀνδρα αὐτὸν λεγέειν χρῆν. But he was crucified: and though he rose from the dead, yet he did not save their city, nor deliver their nation. He could not therefore in their conception be the Messiah. Many of the prophecies might relate to him, as an extraordinary † person: but those,

\* De Bello. L. 6. C. 5. § 4. p. 390.

† Dr. Forster cannot be brought to allow this: in consequence of which he alters the words τῶν θείων προφητῶν to τῶν ἰδίων προφητῶν, which he translates, *their own preachers*, that is, *the Christian preachers*, having reported all these things concerning Jesus. p. 41. 42. But surely this is too forced: and at the same time without any authority.

which

which seemed to promise a triumphant Prince, were looked upon as foreign to his character. They probably allowed him to be the prophet, who was to arise like unto Moses : and to be the man of sorrows, pointed out by Isaiah : but they would not admit, that he was *the lion of the tribe of Judah* : the *anointed Prince* of Daniel, and other Prophets, *of whose kingdom there was to be no end*. Of this we have a remarkable instance in the historian, of whom we are treating. He confesses, that before the destruction of Jerusalem there was a general expectation of a great personage, who was to arise : that he was foretold in the Scriptures ; and was to have dominion over the whole world. To all this he expressly bears witness. But as he lived to see his Country ruined, he cannot be persuaded, that this divine person was to be of his own nation : however determinate the prophecies may have been. He accordingly sets aside all the passages in Scripture to this purpose : and thinks, that the Jews were wrong in their application. The particular prophecy, to which he alludes, he looks upon as a dark and doubtful oracle : and it was certainly so to him, and to his countrymen in general : but to many it was very salutary,



tary, and clear. It was like the cloudy pillar, which was placed between the Egyptians and the Israelites : \* *It was a cloud and darkness to them : but it gave light by night to these.* All this was owing to the Jews not knowing the nature of Christ's mission ; nor of the Deliverer, who was to come. Had our Saviour, instead of speaking about a new law, and a spiritual kingdom, given out, that he came as a temporal Prince ; all Judea, and Syria, and every neighbouring state, would have come under his banner. The power of Rome would not have been able to have shaken him. But for another cause came he into the world ; which was ill understood by the people, to whom he was sent. Hence they admitted the prophecies partially, as their idea of him was partial.

As the evidence of Josephus is of great consequence concerning the general expectation of the Jews at this time ; and the deliverer, who was foretold ; it will be proper to give his words at large. We shall from them perceive, the difficulties, under which he laboured, and the opinions, which he entertained.

\* Exodus. C. 14. v. 20.

\* Το δε ἐπάραν αὐτὲς μάλιστ' ἀπὸ τοῦ πολέμου ἡν χρησμός ἀμφιβολός, ὁμοίως ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὐρημένος γραμμασιν· ὡς κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον ἀπὸ τῆς χώρας τὴν αὐτῶν ἀρξαι τῆς οἰκουμένης. Τὸτο οἱ μὲν ὡς οἰκεῖον ἐξελάβον, καὶ πολλοὶ τῶν σοφῶν ἐπλανήθησαν περὶ τὴν κρίσιν. Ἐδήλῃ δ' ἀρὰ περὶ τὴν Οὐεσπασίαν τὸ λογιὸν ἡγεμονίαν. κ τ λ. *What raised them to this pitch of rashness, so as to enter into war with the Romans, was an ambiguous prophecy, found, like that above mentioned, in the sacred writings : which foretold, that a person out of their country should have dominion over the whole world. The people took this, as relating particularly to their nation : and many persons of experience were mistaken in their interpretation. It in reality related to the dominion of Vespasian. In the above we may*

\* De Bello Jud. L. 6. C. 5. § 4. p. 390. Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judæâ profecti rerum potirentur. Id de Imperatore Romano, quantum eventu postea patuit, prædictum. Suetonius, in Vespasiano. Tacitus speaks to the same purpose. Pluribus persuasio inerat antiquis sacerdotum libris contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæâ rerum potirentur, &c. Tacitus. Hist. L. 5. C. 13. p. 562. See also Zonaras, Vol. 1. p. 575. Ὡς ἀρξαι τῆς ἀπὸ τῆς χώρας αὐτῶν τῆς οἰκουμένης. κ τ λ.

see

see the force of prejudice in a Writer, who was otherwise a man of sense, and learning; and well skilled in the Scriptures. The prophecies about this person, who was expected, were very many in number; and foretold plainly, that he was to be of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David, and to be born at Bethlehem. These with many others equally explicit, are overlooked by Josephus; who refers to one prophecy only; as if there had been but one to this purpose. Even this he does not name: but says, that it was doubtful, and misapplied, merely because he was himself bewildered, and in a state of perplexity. And then, contrary to the express \* purport of the prophecy, he refers it to an alien; in whose life there was not a circumstance, which could be made to correspond. This shews his great uncertainty of mind at this season in respect to the oracles of his Country.

However, while we are blaming the Historian, is he quite so culpable, as we may at first apprehend? While he is straining one prophecy, and one only, in favour of his Ro-

\* His own words are, *απο της χωρας τις αυτων αξει.*



man Patron; is not the reason of it this; that he saw, the others could not be made to agree: and that many of them related to a different person; to a teacher of truth, a preacher of righteousness; to one, who rose from the dead: των θείων προφητων ταυτα τε και μυρια αλλα θαυμασια περι αυτη ειρηκοτων. And here let it be observed, as Josephus was a Jew, that all, he says in regard to Christ, is not by any means so extraordinary, as his application of this one prophecy in favour of Vespasian. Why then should it appear strange, that he, who applies this prophecy to a Roman, should see, that others were fulfilled in Christ, to whom they really related?

As to the miracles of our Saviour they were universally credited by the Jews: nor could it have happened otherwise. Justin Martyr tells Trypho more than once, that the Jews, however obstinate, knew, that Christ rose from the dead: and that many of the prophecies were fulfilled in him. \* Επειδη εγνωκατε αυτον

\* Dialog. cum Tryphone. p. 117. Edit. Benedict.

Ου μετανοησατε, μαθοντες αυτον ανασαντα εκ νεκρων.

He speaks of the resurrection as well known.

ibid. p. 202.

ανασαντα

ἀναστάντα ἐκ νεκρῶν, καὶ ἀναβάντα εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, ὡς αἱ προφητεῖαι προεμνησθὲν γενησομένον, &——μεταδοῦναι, & τ. λ. If these things were known to many of the Jews, why should we think it strange, that some should attest, what they knew. All had their prejudices : but they were not in all alike violent. There were undoubtedly a great many, who saw these evidences for Christianity, and would have come over : but they knew not how to give up the religion of their fathers. I have mentioned, that Herod made no doubt about the miracles of our Saviour ; though he might probably think, that they were the effects of magic. Some said, that they were the operations of an infernal Spirit : but this was still allowing the facts. \* *When Christ cometh, said the people, will he do more miracles, than these, which this man hath done?* Some said of our Saviour, † *he is a good man* : Others said nay : but he deceiveth the people : that is, he telleth them, that he is the Messiah promised to the world. And why, as this was supported by such wonderful evidences, was it not believed ? Because he

\* John. C. 7. v. 31.

† John. C. 7. v. 12.

was meek and lowly; and had nothing about him splendid: and moreover said, that his kingdom was not of this world; which was not to be reconciled with their prejudices. Many of the Jews upon this account were as inveterate against him, as his disciples were zealous in his cause. They shewed uncommon bitterness, and tried to insnare him in his words; and at last brought him to a shameful and cruel death. But there was a third sort between these two extremes; which consisted of a large party in the nation. These saw the sanctity of his manners, the excellency of his doctrines, and were astonished at his miracles. And though they could not allow him to be the Christ, who was to come, yet they esteemed him, as something more than man. Many imagined, that there were two different persons pointed out in the sacred writings: the one a great Prophet, a worker of miracles, and preacher of righteousness: the other a victorious Prince, who was to free them from the bondage of the Romans, and whose dominion was to be over the whole earth. They thought, that the former character might be applied to our Saviour: though they were still staggered about many appear-

E

ances,



ances, which they knew not how to reconcile. Such, I imagine, was Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea: such also Gamaliel; and many of those disciples, who upon a time deserted their \* Master. Many of the first converts after his death had been previously in this state of mind. These, though they were not confirmed in their faith, yet yielded to the evidence of their senses. In consequence of which they believed in part; and admitted the prophecies partially: and had they been called upon to give an account of Christ, they would have afforded much the same history, as is given by Josephus.

Such was the middle party among the Jews. It consisted of a set of people in a state of suspense: who though they were not enemies to the Gospel, yet could not bring themselves to accede to it. Amongst the people of this class we may place the Jewish Historian. He saw the truth, but at a distance; probably not having an opportunity to better inform him-

\* John. C. 6. v. 66.

self. The misfortunes of his country, and his early avocations, prevented his being sufficiently acquainted with the excellence of Christianity. He seems to have been placed, as the learned Rupertus observes, in *confinio lucis, upon the confines of light*: and the evidence which he has given, though it is not that of a Christian, yet is it far from the testimony of an inveterate enemy. He was taken prisoner very early at Jotapata, and remained in the hands of the Romans: which for a long time precluded any intercourse either with the Jews or Christians.

But it may be still urged, that this testimony is after all too gross to be admitted: it being past comprehension, that a Jewish Priest (for such Josephus was) should give credit to the resurrection of Christ, and to his appearance among his disciples. I answer that there is nothing in it strange; if he had received the evidence from good authority: and his office, as Priest, gave him the best opportunity to inquire, and to be informed. Many of the Jews thought, *that our Saviour was Elias*: others, *that he was Jeremias, or else some*

*other \* Prophet, who was risen from the dead.*

Why then, as I have before urged, should we think it impossible for people to believe his resurrection, when it was really effected ; if they had these notions antecedently ? Tertullian says, expressly, that Pilate in his public acts, which he sent to † Tiberius Cæsar, mentioned both the resurrection of Christ, and his being afterwards conversant with his disciples for forty days. This may appear difficult to be believed : and yet we cannot set it aside without running into a greater difficulty ; for how can we suppose, that a writer would dare to falsify the public records at Rome : and frame a device, which could be so easily detected. He could not do any thing, that would more

\* Mathew. C. 16. v. 14.

*Others say, that one of the old Prophets is risen again.*  
Luke. C. 9. v. 19.

† Speaking of the darkness at the crucifixion, he says, *Eum Mundi casum in arcanis vestris habetis.* He adds about Christ: *Cum discipulis quibusdam apud Galilæam, Judææ regionem, ad 40 dies egit.*—*Ea omnia super Christo Pilatus—Cæsari tunc Tiberio nunciavit.* Tertullian Apologet. p. 20. He lived towards the latter end of the second Century.

effectually



effectually ruin his own purpose. It is just as if an Historian now were to appeal to an Act of Parliament of James the First : or an Edict of Henry the Fourth of France. Should such an Act, or Edict, not exist, his reputation would be immediately lost ; and every purpose defeated. If Pilate then gave any credit ; why may we not allow the same to Josephus ? We are oftentimes too soon alarmed : and imagine difficulties, which do not exist. Thus the learned Daubuz seems to have had his scruples ; and in consequence of them he makes use of an ingenious conjecture, to make this history more plausible. Epaphroditus, who encouraged Josephus to write his Antiquities, was à libellis to Nero : and lived to the time of Domitian. The learned Commentator above thinks with some reason, that he was the same as Epiphras, a Christian, the disciple of St. Paul. He moreover imagines, that the Historian inserted this passage about our Saviour in \* compliment to him. Others in like manner

\* Philemon, v. 23.

Huic igitur Epaphrodito, quod esset Christianus, blandire cupiens Josephus, hoc de Christo testimonium et  
E 3 potuit,

manner have thought, that Josephus might not have been persuaded about the truth of these articles, which he inserted; but only conformed himself to the taste of his principal readers; the people of Greece and Rome. Their histories abounded with prodigies. They had their Virbius, Hippolytus, Æsculapius, Alceſtis: and every wonderful occurrence was acceptable to them. But there is no occasion for these expedients. To say the truth; if he had not believed, what he wrote, yet his account would have great weight, as he transmitted the belief of the times. But he certainly did not doubt of the truth of these facts: and the person, who gave such favourable accounts of John the \* Baptist, and James,

potuit, et voluit, suæ historiæ inferere. See Josephus, Havercamp. Vol. 2. de Test. Christi. p. 210.

Ergo cum Josephus hunc Epaphroditum Christianum coleret, oportet etiam, ut de Christo bene sit locutus, ibid. p. 211.

\* Josephus takes notice, that the death of John the Baptist was soon after the marriage of Herod with Herodias: and he mentions him as a man of great virtues; and says, that the defeat of the Jewish army by the Arabian

James, may be credited for what he says about Christ. For the latter history no more deserves to be called in question, than the former. In short there were many who were by no means friends to the Gospel, who were satisfied about the miracles of our Saviour. A very little attention to the Evangelists will

bian Prince Aretas, was looked upon as a judgment upon Herod for his cruelty upon this occasion. Τισι δε των Ιουδαιων εδοκει ολωθεναι τον 'Ηρωδα γρατον υπο τῆ Θεῶ, και δικαιως τινυμενῶ κατα ποιην τῆ Ιωαννῶ, τῆ επικαλεμενῶ Βαπτιστῶ. Κτεινει γαρ τῆτον 'Ηρωδῆς, αγαθον ανδρα, και τῆς Ιουδαιῶς κελευοντα, αρετην επασκουντας, και τῆ προς αλληλῶς δικαιοσυνη, και προς τον Θεον ευσεβειῶ χρωμενῶς, βαπτισμῶ συνιεναι. Antiq. L. 18. C. 5. p. 383. The Historian gives us a farther insight into the criminality of Herod in this marriage, [than is afforded by the Evangelists. Herod had been at Rome, where he saw Herodias. She was his niece, being the daughter of his brother Aristobulus, and wife to Herodes Philippus, who was also his brother by the father's side. This woman he inticed from her husband (at whose house he was entertained during his residence at Rome) and afterwards married her. We see here a complication of incest and seduction. This produced the just reproof of the Baptist, which cost him his life. Herod knew his virtues, and would have forgiven him; but Herodias artfully procured his death.



teach us this truth. \* Τὸτο γὰρ τῆς εὐμηχανῆς  
 τῆς Θεῆς σοφίας, ὅταν καὶ τῆς ἐχθρῆς τῆς ἀληθείας  
 αὐτῆς μαρτυρᾶς ποιεῖ γενεσθαι τῆς ἀληθείας.

It is to be observed, that Josephus had been for a long season separated from his own people. He was moreover in the Roman camp during the siege of Jerusalem: and he speaks at large of the infatuation, obstinacy, and wickedness, of the Jews: with which he seems to have been greatly affected. He more than once says, that the hand of Heaven was apparently against them. His words in one place are very remarkable upon this head; where he speaks to the Jews from the camp of Vespasian! Θεὸς ἀρα, Θεὸς αὐτός, ἐπαγγεί μετα Ρωμαίων καθαρ-  
 σιον αὐτῷ (τῷ Ἰερῷ) πυρ, καὶ τὴν τοσούτων μiasμα-  
 των γεμυσαν πόλιν ἀναρπαζει. Both the ideas, and the language, upon the occasion are very fine: and the purport of the words is this:

\* This is taken notice of by the learned Grabe. Testi-  
 monium Christus non modo cœlitus accepit a Spiritu, ab  
 Angelis; sed in terrâ ab hominibus, ab apostaticis Spi-  
 ritibus, ab erroneis, ab inimico. Τὸτο γὰρ κτλ. Irenæus,  
 L. 4. C. 14.

† De Bello. L. 2. C. 6. p. 375.

*That*

*That it was manifestly the Deity, God himself, who by the hands of the Romans brought those flames of vengeance by way of purification upon the polluted temple: and suffered the city, which was filled with abominations, to be rooted up from its very basis.* These things weaned Josephus from his national prejudices, and made him ready to disclose many truths, which he might otherwise have suppressed.

We may therefore, I think, be assured, that he was the Author of this little, but important, history, which has been attributed to him: and many in the like circumstances would have delivered themselves in the same manner. Let us suppose, that a person, many years after these occurrences, had inquired of one of the Roman Soldiers, who guarded the sepulchre, about Christ and his wonderful works. Would not his account have been similar to that given by Josephus? He might have said, *That, when his Legion was quartered in Judea, he had resided both in Galilee and Jerusalem: and that he had seen many, who were eye-witnesses to the extraordinary events of those times.* He might possibly have added, *I myself saw Jesus, a man of great wisdom, if we may be allowed to call him*  
*a man.*

a man. For he was a performer of very extraordinary operations: and a great teacher among those, who were inclined to religion and morality. This man gained many followers, both among the people of Judea, and the Hellenistæ of other regions. He was the person, who at other times was called Christus. He incurred the illwill of the chief people at Jerusalem; and at their instigation he was condemned by Pilate to be crucified. But those, who valued him in his lifetime, paid the same regard to him after his death. And they had good reason: for he appeared to them in person, after he had been three days dead: and they saw him repeatedly, and for some time. And of this I can so far bear testimony, as I was an eye-witness to his resurrection. For a band of my Cohort being ordered to guard the tomb, where he was laid, it was my chance to be one of the party: and we accordingly took our station. About the last watch there was an earthquake; and the tomb, which was closed up with a large massy stone, opened: and all we, who were about it, were seized with a panick; such as I never experienced before. In short, we all became as dead men, while the extraordinary operation was carrying on. For we saw manifestly a divine personage opening the sepulchre: and the dead body revived, and ascended from it. In the morn-  
ing



ing we went into the city, and reported to the Chief Priests and Rulers, what had happened. They did not controvert the point, for it was too evident. They however gave us money; and desired that we would give out, that the disciples came by night, while we were asleep, and stole the body. This was a very idle expedient. For you well know the nature of a Roman watch: and the discipline, to which it is subject. Roman Centinels afford no such opportunity to be deceived. And if it were possible for every one of the band to have thus fallen asleep, how could we have known, by whom, and in what manner, the body was taken away. Besides if the disciples had once intended such a scheme, they would have put it in execution upon the preceding night, before the tomb was sealed, or the watch placed. And when they were once in possession of the body, they might have said any thing. For if they could but persuade the people, that he was risen; it would signify little, upon what day it was, or at what hour. But the body certainly did rise: and many of the Jews averred, that in their sacred books, there were prophecies to this purpose; and that Christ was to be a great Prince, and to rule over the world. But as he has ceased to appear; and both the temple and city of the Jews have since  
been

*been laid in ruins ; I leave you to judge of this latter opinion. All, that I can say, is ; that he seems to have been one of the most extraordinary personages, which has appeared for ages : and there is a large sect called Christians, who still reverence his memory, and follow his doctrines.*

I beg to know, if there be any thing in this supposed narration, which we may not fairly imagine, would have been mentioned upon such an occasion ? And is there any thing said by Josephus, that may not from hence be warranted ? We may be assured, that a person might have been witness to many of our Saviour's miracles, and yet by no means a proselyte to his doctrines ; nor believed in him as the Messiah. Many of the disciples fell away ; even the Apostles forsook him, and fled. And this affords me an opportunity of comparing the testimony of Josephus with the Character given of Christ by the two disciples, who were journeying to Emmaus. For they were at that season in the same state of uncertainty, as we may judge Josephus to have been afterwards : and their account is very similar to that given by him. They were joined in their way by our Saviour unknown to them ; who  
asked

asked them of what they were discoursing.

\* *When one of them whose name was Cleopas answering said unto him: Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things, which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, what things? And they said unto him, concerning Jesus of Nazareth; which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God, and all the people: and how the Chief Priests and our Rulers delivered him to be condemned to death; and have crucified him. But we trusted, it had been he, which should have redeemed Israel. And beside all this, to-day is the third day, since these things were done. Yea and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre. And when they found not his body, they came saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said, that he was also alive. And certain of them, which were with us, went to the sepulchre; and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.* If we compare this with the account given by the Historian, we shall find the manner of narration different; but the history in most parts the same. As to the disciples, their

\* Luke. C. 24. v. 18.



attestation is very similar to that in the passage above. They looked upon Jesus to have been a Prophet mighty in word and deed. They mention some of the principal circumstances of his life and death; and speak of his rising from the grave. They add, that they once looked, that he would prove the Messiah Prince; the person, who was to redeem Israel. They intimate that they were disappointed in their hopes: that they had been astonished, embarrassed; and were still in a state of uncertainty. And this was more or less the situation of Josephus; and of thousands of the Jewish nation. The disciples indeed had the cloud taken off from their understanding by a miraculous interposition; while others remained in darkness. Many were left in a middle state; in a kind of uncertain twilight: *sublustris noctis in umbra*? By these means they were empowered to descry some truths; but had not light enough to comprehend their purport. Such particularly was the situation of our Historian; who has been able to transmit to us much curious evidence to the confirmation of the Scriptures; and above all this testimony concerning our Saviour. But at the same time, that he acknowledged him to be Jesus called Christ,

he knew not, that he was the *mighty God, the everlasting Counsellor, the Prince of peace.*

When people therefore think, that, whoever knew so much, must necessarily have known more; and that such evidences were too strong to be resisted, they are certainly mistaken. Josephus might have written every thing, which is above mentioned, and still not have been a Christian. Those, who form opposite notions, have not considered the force of prejudice. They know not, what is meant by a stumbling-block, and rock of offence; nor the *σκανδαλον*, of which the disciples were so frequently warned. If the same miracles were to be exhibited at this day, would they be attended with better effect? Or if Christianity, whose evidence arises to moral certainty, could be demonstrated, would it be uniformly embraced? We may be assured, not. Some are light and inattentive, others capricious and easily disgusted: and many are devoted to worldly pursuits and pleasure; upon whom the truth can have little effect. The most accumulated evidence is often outweighed by a single doubt, or scruple: and all, we know, made void, because there remains something  
still

still unknown. Such is the debility of human nature, which is easily misled by diffidence and caprice, and prejudices of various kinds. There is moreover, what is called hardness of heart. This is often observable in persons of great natural parts : who see the truth in its full strength ; yet cannot be won over. They admit the evidences : and stand as it were in the blaze of day ; yet feel not the light, which is so forcibly pressed upon them. *I acknowledge, says \*Roussseau, that the majesty of the Scriptures astonishes me ; and the sanctity of the Gospel fills me with rapture. Look into the writings of the Philosophers with all their pomp and parade : how trivial they appear, when compared with this sacred volume ? Is it possible, that a book so simple, and so sublime, should be the work of a man ? Is it possible, that he, whose history it contains, should be a mere man ? Is the style that of an enthusiast, or of a sectary inflated with ambition ? What sweetness ! what purity of morals ! what force, what persuasion in his instructions ! His maxims how sublime ! his discourses how wise and how profound ! Such presence of mind : such beauty and precision in his answers ! Where is the Man, or the Philoso-*

\* Emilius. Vol. 2. p. 86.



pher, who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die, without weakness, or ostentation?—If Socrates lived, and died like a Philosopher; Christ lived and died like a God. Shall we say, that the Evangelical History was invented at pleasure? My Friend, inventions are not made after this manner: and the history of Socrates, concerning which nobody entertains a doubt, is not so well attested, as that of Christ.—The Gospel hath such strong and inimitable marks of truth, that the Inventor would be more surprizing, than the Hero. Is not this a noble Panegyric? and must we not from hence conclude that the Author is a determined Christian? Stop, gentle Reader, for a moment; and attend the sequel: for his words are these. *Yet notwithstanding all this, the same Gospel abounds with things so incredible, and so repugnant to reason, that it is impossible for any man of sense to conceive, or admit, them.* Thus the Evangelical writings, and the doctrines, which they contain, are finally set at nought; because there are some things, which Monsieur Rousseau cannot conceive. Whoever wants to know, what is hardness of heart, cannot have a better example, than this, which is here produced. Notwithstanding *the strong and inimitable marks of truth*

in the Gospel; and *the certainty* of Christ's history, which is represented, as more certain than things the best certified, the Author tries secretly to undermine \* the whole. He accordingly makes this very Gospel no better than the Alcoran: and brings Christ himself upon a level with Mahomet and other impostors. This he does by traducing the essential parts of those histories, which he has been praising: by asserting, that † other religions have

\* I considered, says Rousseau, the diversity of sects, with which the earth is overspread; each mutually charging the other with deception, and error. I asked, *Which is the true religion?* Each of them made answer, mine: none but my self, and those of my way of thinking, are in the right. And how do you know, that yours is the true religion? *Because God said it.* And who told you that God said it? *The Parson of our Parish, &c.* Emilius Vol. 2. p. 62.

† We have three principal Religions in Europe; one admits but a single revelation, the other admits two; the other three. Each detests and curses the other two; charging them with blindness, hardness of heart, obstinacy, and falshood. p. 78. At the conclusion speaking of the Christian Religion he says, *It may be the best, but it has certainly every prejudice against it.*

In the College of Sorbonne it is as clear as the noon day,

have equal pretensions to be believed: and that a Christian is not better assured in his faith, than a \* Mahometan. We see here, how capricious human wit is, and how inconsistent with itself. All which I mention to shew, that there are people now in the world, who can see the force of evidence, yet do not intimately feel it; as their heart cannot retain any sensible impressiion. Hence they become unstable, irresolute, and devoted to doubt, and darkness.

There are other objections, though of no great consequence, which are raised from the

day, that the prophecies concerning the Messiah relate to Christ. Among the Rabbies at Amsterdam it is equally clear, that they do not bear the least relation to him. p. 11.

\* At Constantinople the Turks tell their reasons, but we dare not mention ours: it is here our turn to cringe. —Two thirds of mankind are neither Jews, Mahometans, nor Christians. p. 81. I look upon all religions, as so many salutary institutions.—I believe them all good when God is served in a proper manner. p. 89. Who would think it possible, that there should be such capriciousness and inconsistency in man?



silence of Authors. This is a very precarious and fatal way of judging about the truth : and we may deprive the world of much good evidence, if we arbitrarily set it aside, because we do not meet with it in every place, where it might possibly be expected. It is said, that this passage about our Saviour is not to be found in Origen : and it certainly is not. Yet I think, that he manifestly alludes to it, as I have shewn. We likewise do not find it in Photius : and great stress is laid upon this omission. It is to be observed, that this writer makes mention of the two principal works of Josephus ; the \* War of the Jews ; and the † Antiquities of the same people. And in respect to the latter, the whole of his account consists in describing the life of the Author ; and his style, and manner of writing. He produces no one circumstance from the history. How then can we expect, that he would have quoted this particular passage from it ; when he does not mention a single fact ? But it is urged, that it ought to have been previously mentioned in the account given by him of

\* Photius. C. 47. p. 34.

† Ibid. C. 76. p. 165.

\* *Justus Tiberienfis*. This Historian was contemporary with *Josephus*: and it is observable, that he never made any mention of our Saviour. In consequence of this it is † said, that *Photius* would necessarily have contrasted the silence of *Justus* with the evidence given by *Josephus*; if such evidence had existed. But this notion of all others is the most idle: for there is no reason to think, that *Photius* at that time had met with the *Antiquities* of *Josephus*. His work contains an account of all the Authors, which he had read, in the order, in which they came to hand: and the whole consists of two hundred and eighty articles. That he described them, as they came to hand, seems very evident from many circumstances: but especially from the two histories of *Josephus*; which stand at a great distance from one another. Between the war of the Jews, and the *Antiquities*, there are twenty-eight different treatises. He would never have thus separated them, if he had read them in immediate succession. As to the article of *Justus Tiberienfis* it stands at a still greater

\* *Ibid.* C. 33. p. 20.

† See *Faber*, *Blondellus*, and others.

interval : and precedes the Antiquities of Josephus by forty-three numbers. It may possibly have been some years before he met with these Antiquities. There is therefore not the least reason to expect, that he should have introduced the passage in dispute in his account of \* Justus. In short it is hard to say, should we pursue this fatal rule of cancelling, where the mischief would stop. For if we are to make void the account given of Christ, because not mentioned by Photius ; we must upon the same grounds set aside the valuable Treatise of Josephus against Apion : for this too does not occur in Photius. And it is more easy to conceive, that a person should omit a few lines, than neglect a whole volume. But this way of judging is very fallacious, and equally unjust.

\* Some think, that Photius should have introduced this passage in his account of the Book *περί της τῆ παντός αἰτίας*, which he at first attributed to Josephus. But he tells us afterwards, that he found, that it was written by another person. Besides, when he treated of this book, he had never seen the Antiq. Judaïcæ, from whence the extract was to be taken. The book above mentioned occurs in Photius. C. 48. p. 36. by many Articles antecedent to the Antiquities of Josephus.

The



The like objection has been raised from the silence of Justin Martyr, and Clemens of Alexandria: but it is of no validity. People do not consider, that these writers, and especially the former, lived rather too early to have this evidence of such consequence, as that it should necessarily be mentioned. Justin was born within a very few years of the death of \* Josephus: and consequently both he, and those, with whom he conversed, must have known persons, who had been contemporaries with the Historian; and who could afford the same intelligence, as is recorded by him. Justin would hardly quote from a single person, what was equally authenticated by numbers: and we seldom have recourse to historical evidence, when oral tradition is so recent and copious: and at the same time of equal authority. It is said of Ignatius, that he saw Christ, when upon earth: and he lived to the beginning of

\* Josephus wrote his Antiquities about the thirteenth year of Domitian, anno C. 93. How long he lived afterwards is uncertain. Justin is said to have been born A. C. 114. Had Josephus lived to the birth of Justin, he would have been seventy-six years old: for he was born A. C. 38: the first year of Caligula's reign.

the second century. How many must have been alive at the time of Justin, who had conversed with Ignatius, and with others of the same standing? It was therefore by no means incumbent upon this Father in his conference with Trypho the Jew, to urge the words of Josephus: for his opponent, if he had chosen to have abided by it, must have had in the beginning of his life the like evidence often repeated. The first Christians had the Commentaries of \* Herod, and the writings of Molo, Mnaseas, and Nicolaus Damascenus, in which there must have been matters to their purpose: but they do not mention them. Why then do we lay such a stress upon their not appealing to Josephus? In short these objections are mere cavils, which do not deserve to be answered: but I thought it better not to pass them by; as too much weight has been laid on these imaginary defects.

It is observable, that in the dialogue with Trypho, Justin never dwells upon the character

\* Josephus Ant. L. 15. C. 6. p. 756. In these might have been expected some account of John the Baptist, and of the Magi. The other writers are afterwards mentioned by Eusebius in confirmation of the bible history.

of

of Christ, nor upon his doctrines, miracles, and resurrection; but seems rather to mention them incidentally: And the reason is, that these articles were not then disputed. The great subject in debate was; whether Christ after all was the Messiah. The whole of the dialogue turns upon this. To have urged upon such an occasion the words of Josephus would have been telling Trypho, what he knew already; and trying to prove, what was never disputed. For had the Jew entertained any doubts of these things, Justin must have begun with other arguments. But he speaks of these things, as well known, and in general \* allowed: and Trypho seems to acquiesce. We may be assured, that in these early times Christ was admitted, as a great prophet; and his operations were believed among the Jews by numbers, who were not converts.

There is still another objection to this history of Christ, which arises from the place of its introduction. The learned Faber thinks, that it is inserted in a manner so unnatural, and irregular, that this alone is sufficient to

\* See Justin Dialog. p. 117.



prove it a forgery. I must confess, that there was a time, when I yielded to his authority, and thought, that there was reason in his arguments. But it appears to me now in a very different light: and the very premises, which made me think it an interpolation, afford me proof of its authenticity. Let us however state the objection in its full force: and afterwards produce our reasons for dissenting from this able critic. Josephus in the foregoing chapter had been giving an account of a tumult and sedition at Jerusalem; which took its rise from Pilate's endeavouring to bring a watercourse into the city. The Jews opposed it, and interrupted the work: upon which Pilate, having taken a proper opportunity to revenge himself, set upon the Jews with a band of soldiers, and some of them were slain. He in another place says, that about the same time there was a similar tumult in Rome, which was still more fatal to his countrymen.

\* Και ὑπο τῆς αὐτῆς χρόνους ἕτερον τι δεινὸν ἐθορυβεί τῆς Ἰουδαίας. &c. Now between these two sections, and their respective histories, this account of Christ is introduced; and the natural progress of the history is apparently interrupted. Leave out the passage about our Sa-  
viour,

viour, and the connexion is maintained, and the series of detail carried on in proper order. To this I answer, that all this is very true: but must every thing in history be set aside, which is obliquely introduced: and must truth be necessarily made void, because there is a seeming irregularity in its being transmitted. Josephus is certainly a valuable writer: but we must not expect the same method and elegance, which we meet with in Thucydides, and the best Writers of Greece. He often introduces little histories by way of Episode: of which we have an instance in the very next chapter. For when he is going to give an account of the second calamity, which befell the Jews at Rome, he stops short, and gives a detail much longer, than this, which is objected to, and of less moment. It related to a scene of villainy carried on in the temple of Isis. He intimates indeed, that he shall take the liberty to introduce it. But his prefacing it in this manner amounts to nothing: for the interruption is the same, and the promised history suspended. It is therefore idle to dwell upon an objection, which is obviated, as soon as made. We must make allowance for different modes of writing: and not arbitrarily  
at

at this time of day frame rules; and then bring the truth of ancient history to this imaginary test. What led Josephus to introduce the history of Christ, where it is now inserted, was the name of Pilate being previously mentioned. This afforded a fair connexion; and he proceeded accordingly.

And here it is observable, that when he begins his account concerning Jesus, it is in these words, *κατα τατον τον χρονον*; meaning, *at the time*, when Pilate was Procurator of Judea, Jesus made his appearance. But the history, which follows, begins, *και υπο της αυτης χρονος*. *Moreover about, or near to, those same times*. I may perhaps be thought too minute, yet I cannot help thinking, that this difference in expression proves, almost to a demonstration, that this history always stood, where it is now found. The Author, speaking of Christ, says, as I have above mentioned, that he made his appearance *κατα τατον τον χρονον*: that is, *at the time before specified*, when Pilate presided in Judea, and when there was an insurrection of the Jews. But speaking afterwards of the second disturbance, he varies his phrase, and says, *υπο της αυτης χρονος*: *near, or about, those same*



*same times; the times of the two former \* events; another misfortune happened.* In these words he refers both to the time of Pilate; and to the time of our Saviour; whose histories immediately † preceded. He accordingly changes the word χρόνον to a plural; as he refers to a plurality of events. Had there not originally been something introduced between the accounts of the two seditions, the Author would have used a singular, χρόνον; as he does in innumerable other ‡ places. But, as I before said, alluding to two events, he alters it to a plural; as it related to a twofold piece of history. From hence I conclude, that this epitome of our Saviour's life and character was undoubtedly in the original of Josephus. For the Author in the last section manifestly refers to two pieces of history, which had preceded;

\* The events stand in the following order according to their sections.

ε. Πιλατος, και η φασις.

γ. Κατα τετον τον χρονον Ιησους, σοφος ανηρ.

δ. Υπο τας αυτας χρονους ιτερον τι δεινον, κ τ λ.

† See backward, p. 8. where the original is quoted at large.

‡ See Daubuz.

and

and the account about our Saviour must necessarily have been one of them. It therefore always stood, where it is now found; and cannot but be deemed genuine. This argument, if true, (as I presume it to be,) precludes all future altercation, and makes void every scruple, which has hitherto been idly encouraged.

The purpose of Josephus in his Antiquities of the Jews, was to take off some imputations, which had been cast upon that people; and to vindicate their character to the world. For this purpose he likewise wrote his very learned treatise against Apion; who had illiberally defamed them. In each of these works he did great honour to his nation: yet no writer was ever so detested, as Josephus has been by the Jews, who came after him. From whence could this disaffection arise, but from this too favourable testimony about our Saviour? This is what has leavened the whole, which he wrote: and all the honour, which he otherwise conferred, could not compensate for it. \* *This*, says Mr. Whiston,

\* Dissertation. 1. p. 69.

*bears so hard upon the unbelieving Jewish nation; as that it could never be endured by them. It seems to me to be the principal cause of their rejecting this excellent \* Author.* This abhorrence has providentially been the cause, that this passage has not been obliterated in many copies of the history. For if the Jews in after times could in any degree have admitted the Historian; they would have found means to have either erased, or omitted, this account in their manuscripts. But we are assured, that no such deficiency is any where to be observed. Thus we find, that the hatred of this people has been an advantage to the Historian: and affords us strong evidence, that the history in question, was ever to be found where it stands. Had it been away; no offence would have been taken by those of his nation.

In short it was never presumed, that any external proof existed in opposition to this memorable passage. For the space of near fifteen hundred years it was transmitted un-

\* They repudiated the genuine history, and in its room substituted an idle detail, supposed to have been written by Josephus Ben Gorion.

impeached:



impeached: and so far were writers from imagining, that there was any deceit, that they esteemed it of the greatest consequence. From the time of Eusebius to that of Platina, and \* Trithemius, it was quoted at large; and justly valued: nor was there a single writer in all that space, † or before, who afforded the least hint to its disadvantage. And when people began in the sixteenth century to entertain suspicions; these were not warranted by any real evidence: but proceeded merely from doubts and surmises, which were unjustly entertained. They raised imaginary difficulties,

• It has been quoted at large, by Eusebius twice: By Hegeſippus de Excid. Urbis Hieroſol. By Rufinus in Hiſt. Eccleſiaſt. By Hieron. de viris illuſt. in Joſepho. Alſo in the Greek verſion of Sophronius. By Iſidorus Peluſiota. By Sozomen, but partially. By Epiphanius Scholaſticus at large. By Freculphus Lexoviensis. By Macarius. By Cedrenus. By Zonaras. See Daubuz and Whiſton. Alſo Fabricii Bibliothec. Gr. L. 4. C. 6. p. 237. No extract from any hiſtory was ever more faithfully copied, or more repeatedly quoted by Writers in a long ſucceſſion. And to this liſt other Authors might be added, were it neceſſary, quite down to the fifteenth century.

† From the year 324 to 1480.

and

and suffered themselves to be too easily disgusted. They presumed, that the whole was an interpolation; and founded their notion on the internal evidence: it being inconceivable to them, that a Jewish Writer could afford a testimony so much in favour of Christianity. This internal evidence I have abundantly examined; and it appears to me manifest, that thousands of the Jews at that time believed every thing, which is there said: and would have afforded the same evidence, if required. In consequence of this I am persuaded, that our hesitation and diffidence arises from prejudice: and that we have formed wrong ideas both of the people and the times. We do not seem to admit of any medium between a zealous disciple, and a determined adversary. But in this we do not make a just estimate of persons and things; and dwell too much on the extremes. There was doubtless an interval of many degrees, in which might be perceived a gradual descent from full conviction to a partial and limited belief: from thence to a state of suspended wonder and admiration; and so on to doubt, indifference, and coldness; and finally to disaffection, bitterness, and obdurate hatred. I do not mention disbelief of

the miracles : for that could not in those times have happened. They were allowed long after, even by Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian. Those therefore, who saw them, must have believed them ; and must have attested what they knew : though their inferences may have been very different. In consequence of this, we may allow the truth sometimes to be witnessed by people, who are not perfectly attached to it. We are told, that *the very Devils believe, and tremble*. We must not therefore expect even infidelity to be uniform, nor apostacy consistent. We find, that scoffers have their scruples. \* Rousseau reveres the Mass : and Voltaire has his Confessor.

\* Under the character of the Vicar in Savoy, he mentions *the grandeur of the sacrament* : and speaks of it as a real and *incomprehensible mystery*. At the consecration of the wafer, he says, *I try to annihilate my understanding before the supreme Intelligence.—With awful reverence I pronounce the words of consecration : and I join to it all the faith dependent upon my will, to render them of due effect*. Emilius. Vol. 2. p. 90. I suppose by *all the faith* he at least means some faith ; or his words amount to nothing. Who would suppose, that this could have been said by a person, who had just before esteemed the Gospel no better than the Alcoran ? Here we see superstition and infidelity go hand in hand.

Thus



Thus have I endeavoured to redeem the credit of this inestimable piece of history; and to obviate the objections, which prejudice has raised against it. I hope, that I have laboured to good purpose; and that all those scruples for the future will be removed, by which the truth has been hitherto impeded.

F I N I S.

[ 28 ]

CNC

MVSEVM  
BRITANNICVM

*Published by the same Author,*

- I. **O**bservations and Inquiries relating to various Parts of Ancient History.
  - II. A New System: or, An Analysis of Ancient Mythology, in 3 vols. 4to.
  - III. A Vindication of the Apamean Medal; and of the Inscription ΝΩΕ.
  - IV. A further Illustration of the Analysis; in Answer to some foreign Observations.
  - V. An Address to Dr. Priestly upon his *Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity illustrated.*
- 2

